

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 DODE-00 /051 W

-----050812Z 063640 /21

R 041543Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7350

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY MOGADICIO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FT, FR

SUBJ: OAU DJIBOUTI CONFERENCE CLOSES

REF: ACCRA 2482

1. OAU DJIBOUTI CONFERENCE CLOSED EVENING 1 APRIL 77 WITH EXPECTED RHETORIC AND WITH NO SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS MADE IN RECONCILING THE BASIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE AFFARS AND ISSAS CONFEREES. THE CONFERENCE HAS HAD THE POSSIBLE EFFECT OF FURTHER COALESCING THE VARIOUS AFFARS AND ISSAS FACTIONS INTO TWO OPPOSING CAMPS, BUT WITH BOTH CAMPS OPERATING WITH NO OVERALL LEADERSHIP OUR GUESS IS THAT A FALLING OUT WILL OCCUR QUICKLY.

2. THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL AND UNRESOLVED POLITICAL QUESTION BETWEEN THE AFFARS AND ISSAS APPEARS TO BE THE AFFARS OPPOSITION TO ELECTIONS AT THE TIME OF THE MAY 8 REFERENDUM FOR SINGLE MEMBER CONSTITUTENCIES. THE

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AFFARS, KNOWING THEY WILL BE OUTVOTED IN DJIBOUTI CITY, PREFER PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION ON A NATIONAL BASIS, THE ISSAS, OF COURSE, STAND TO LOSE BY SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT AND WANT TO STICK TO THE PARIS PLAN.

3. OAU IS TRYING TO PORTARY CONFERENCE AS OVERALL SUCCESS IN THAT UNANIMOUS RESOLUTIONS WERE REACHED TO:

CREATE A NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FRONT (POWERS NOT DEFINED) EMBRACING ALL POLITICAL PARTIES; TO WORK TOGETHER WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE TO ESTABLISH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE; TO HOLD NATIONAL REFERENDUM (NOT ELECTIONS, WHICH ONLY ISSAS WANT) ON 8 MAY; TERMINATE THE FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE AFTER INDEPENDENCE (ALTHOUGH THE TIMING AND EXTENT OF FRENCH WITHDRAWAL WAS NOT MADE CLEAR); AND TO SET UP A NATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE PARTIES TO WORK OUT POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. THE LATTER POINT IS A TOOTHLESS VERSION OF THE NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL (REPORTED REFTEL) PROPOSED ORIGINALLY BY THE AFFARS. OAU DJIBOUTI COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BASSOUNY CLAIMS THAT THESE "AGREEMENTS" ARE A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT, WHICH IS PROBABLY AN INDICATION OF HOW HOPELESS DISCUSSION ON MEANINGFUL ISSUES MUST HAVE BEEN IN CLOSED SESSION.

4. MANY OBSERVERS AT THE CONFERENCE COMMENTED AS TO THE LACK OF CLEAR IDEOLOGICAL POSITIONS ON THE PART OF THE VARIOUS FACTIONS. THE INDIVIDUAL AMBITIONS OF THEIR LEADSHIP, ON THE OTHER HAND, APPEARS TO BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ALL CASES.
SMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE, MEETING REPORTS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ACCRA02524
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770117-1180
Format: TEL
From: ACCRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770493/aaaadcvy.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e14801ab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ACCRA 2482
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2913244
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OAU DJIBOUTI CONFERENCE CLOSES
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, PORO, FT, FR, OAU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e14801ab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009